

rosterfy

The Volunteer:
Recruitment Playbook

North America

Recruitment Redefined Create experiences loved by the modern day volunteer

ROSTERFY GUIDE

THE VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT PLAYBOOK

Volunteer recruitment is not a transactional task – it's a strategic driver of impact.

This guide is designed for organizations navigating modern recruitment pressures. It brings together practical frameworks, expert insight, and actionable tools to help you build sustainable, inclusive, and high-performing volunteer programs.

AT A GLANCE:

- **Context & pressures:** Why volunteer recruitment feels harder today – from time scarcity to rising expectations.
- **Understanding the modern volunteer:** Motivations, availability, and what makes volunteering feel "worth it".
- **Designing roles that convert:** Creating clear, flexible, purpose-led opportunities that attract the right people.
- **The Digital Front Door:** Reducing friction through online portals and app focused engagement.
- **Removing Structural Barriers:** Expanding access through inclusive, accessible program design.
- **Conversion & Activation:** Measuring and improving the gap between application and first shift.
- **Retention as a strategy:** Turning one-off volunteers into long-term contributors.
- **Performance & partnerships:** Tracking what matters and leveraging corporate pathways to scale sustainably.





Executive summary

By Bennett Merriman
CEO & CO-FOUNDER - ROSTERFY

Volunteering remains one of the most powerful catalysts for positive change in our world. It underpins the vital services, community networks, and cultural movements that define a thriving society.

Across the United States and Canada, the sheer appetite for volunteering is truly inspiring.

Every day, millions of individuals selflessly step forward, raising their hands to dedicate their precious time, energy, and diverse talents to the causes they care about.

At Rosterfy, we are incredibly proud to play a foundational role in this ecosystem, empowering some of the most impactful, large-scale volunteer programs worldwide.

Our platform is now trusted across 77 countries and translated into over a dozen languages, enabling organizations to mobilize talent on a global scale.

We regularly see the immense financial and operational weight this workforce carries; in fact, the Independent Sector's 2026 valuation of a volunteer hour in the United States has climbed to an unprecedented $34.00+/hour.[1]

However, as we look at the landscape today, we must confront a critical operational challenge: successful service delivery and event management are entirely reliant on the reliability and sustained engagement of these volunteers.

While the passion to give back is as strong as ever, modern life introduces severe constraints. Rising living costs, shifting work schedules, and a hyper-competitive attention economy mean that human time has become a rare and precious commodity.

High-volume operations can no longer afford to rely on transactional, manual, or fragmented onboarding processes that create administrative bottlenecks and drive enthusiastic supporters away.

While the passion to give back remains strong, modern life introduces severe constraints.

Time has become a rare commodity and high-volume operations can no longer afford manual onboarding bottlenecks that drive enthusiastic supporters away. Ultimately, volunteers are the vital enablers that allow your organization to deliver its core mission.

To secure long-term commitment, we must create modern volunteer experiences that protect their time and keep them deeply connected to your cause.

This playbook is designed to help you make that strategic shift. With the right infrastructure in place and a highly engaged volunteer community, your organization can break through the noise, achieve exponential impact and deliver **life-changing outcomes for the communities you serve.**

The Recruitment Challenge

Recruiting volunteers today is less about inspiring people to give their time and more about removing barriers and creating experiences that fit into their busy lives.

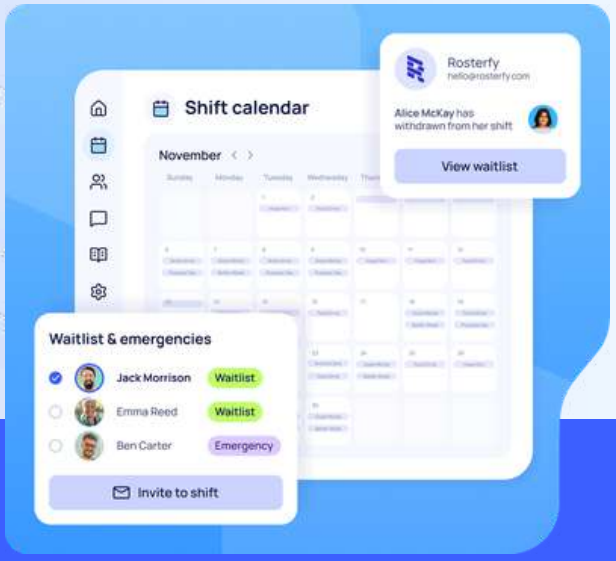
Navigating the attention economy in North American volunteering

The landscape of volunteering across the United States and Canada is undergoing a profound paradigm shift. The traditional challenge - simply convincing people to give their time - has evolved. In North America, civic passion and the desire to give back remain exceptionally high; however, we are living in a hyper-competitive attention economy.

Time has become the ultimate scarce commodity.

Modern volunteers are no longer just looking for a way to fill an open hour; they are looking to direct their finite energy toward highly intentional movements, missions, and communities where they feel an immediate, authentic connection.

The real barrier to successful recruitment is no longer a lack of interest—it is program friction.



ROSTERFY SOLUTION - THE STRATEGIC ENABLER
Our centralized, secure platform manages the full volunteer lifecycle – from recruitment and onboarding to credential tracking, scheduling, communication, and impact reporting.

It supports **5 million users** across more than **77 countries, powering more than 150 million volunteer hours**. Rosterfy enables organisations to attract and mobilise volunteers faster, demonstrate impact, and scale volunteer programmes sustainably. 2

VOLUNTEER AVAILABILITY	FRAGMENTED PROCESSES	RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS	EVOLVING EXPECTATIONS
KEY FRICTION			
People still want to volunteer, but time is scarce. Rising living costs, unpredictable work schedules, and caring responsibilities limit capacity, widening the gap between community need and volunteer supply.	Manual sign-ups, unclear role descriptions, and disconnected systems slow recruitment, frustrate applicants and increase administrative workload for staff.	Volunteer teams juggle multiple priorities. Limited capacity can slow responses, reduce strategic recruitment, and leave motivated volunteers unsupported, increasing pressure on the team and the risk of burnout.	Modern volunteers expect digitalfirst, flexible, and impact-focused experiences. Outdated or paper-based systems create friction, cause drop-offs, and reduce engagement.



Understanding the modern volunteer

Understand the modern volunteer

Volunteers haven't disappeared – they remain deeply committed to causes they care about.

Volunteers haven't disappeared – they remain deeply committed to causes they care about. But modern life is busy. Work, family, caring responsibilities, and rising living costs mean that time is scarce, making every volunteering opportunity precious.

What unites modern volunteers is their expectation of seamless, rewarding experiences that make their time feel well spent. Motivation is not generational.

Age is far less predictive than experience and context. Cross-generational research shows volunteers consistently value positive environments, growth opportunities, social interaction, and meaningful impact. [3]



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Know your volunteers.

Understand the people giving their time and use insights to design better opportunities. **Use our Volunteer Insights Framework to:**

- Capture motivations, availability and barriers
- Identify patterns and segment your audience
- Translate insights into actionable role design

Your volunteer insights framework

CORE CHARACTERISTICS	IMPLICATION FOR RECRUITMENT
DIVERSE MOTIVATIONS	Volunteers act out of purpose, social connection, skill development, and personal wellbeing. Recruitment messaging should address multiple drivers.
DIGITAL-FIRST EXPECTATIONS	Mobile-friendly applications, fast confirmation, clear next steps, and real-time updates are now standard.
FLEXIBLE AVAILABILITY	Volunteers need options that fit around work, study, or caring responsibilities. Offering modular or short-term roles should be the baseline.
IMPACT-FOCUSED	Volunteers want to see the difference they make. Transparent reporting of outcomes reinforces engagement and retention.



Role design and outcome clarity

Role design and outcome clarity

Designing opportunities that convert.

One of the most common causes of recruitment struggle is mismatched role design. Roles are often written quickly, inherited from previous years, or shaped around organisational convenience rather than volunteer experience.

When people see vague descriptions such as **“general volunteer support”** or **“help where needed”** they struggle to picture themselves in the role. Uncertainty creates hesitation – and hesitation leads to drop-off.

Organisations with well-designed roles and clear volunteering strategies were significantly more likely to report recruitment as easy.[3]

Why should you think like a marketer

Designing opportunities that convert.

Think of volunteer recruitment like marketing. Your “offer” should be clear, compelling, and tailored to your audience. Marketers are taught to craft engaging messages that answer the question such as:

- What is the role?
- What do I have to do?
- When am I needed?
- Who will it impact?
- Will I get help?
- What difference will this make?

Support 50 isolated older adults each week – 2 hours, evenings or weekends - imagine the difference you make in your community.

CORE ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE ROLE DESIGN

1. **CLARITY:** Define responsibilities, time commitments and what success looks like.
2. **IMPACT VISIBILITY:** Show who benefits and how the role contributes to the mission.
3. **SUPPORT:** Outline training, supervision, tools and key contacts.
4. **FLEXIBILITY:** Offer modular, one-off, remote or seasonal opportunities to fit modern lives.



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Design volunteer roles that convert.

Create clear, purpose-led roles that attract the right volunteers and reduce drop-offs. **Use our Role Design Template to:**

- Define responsibilities and time commitments
- Highlight the impact of the role on your cause
- Build flexibility into shifts, location, and duration

Your role design template

What makes a volunteer role genuinely attractive?

We asked volunteering experts what makes someone not just interested in a role, but motivated to get involved.

The most effective roles are defined by the overall experience, not just individual tasks. They are clear, purposeful, easy to access, and designed to fit around real lives. Modern volunteers want to see themselves in the role, understand their tangible impact, feel confident in what is expected, and **know their time is valued**.

Crucially, an opportunity's appeal extends far beyond the cause itself—it is heavily dictated by operational accessibility. **Organizations unlock massive, under-utilized talent pools when they design micro-volunteering options**, taster sessions, and highly flexible, modular shifts. By lowering the initial barrier to entry and respecting fluid schedules, accessibility becomes a primary recruitment engine.

> "What makes an opportunity genuinely compelling for our workforce is clarity and prestige. When volunteers see a highly organized, professional program layout that respects their time and gives them total visibility over what they will be achieving on the ground, they say 'yes' without hesitation."
>
> **Workforce Management Team, Tampa Bay Super Bowl LV Host Committee**

> "Our volunteers aren't just looking to fill time; they want to feel connected to the direct outcome of their service. When a role clearly maps out how their hours turn into thousands of meals delivered to families in need, it transforms from a shift into a mission they actively want to show up for."
>
> **Katie Ann Lapp, Volunteer Director, Blessings of Hope**

> "It's important to be clear on what potential " volunteers are signing up for, they need to understand the time commitment, responsibilities. They need to see that the organisation is organised and ef fective. Knowing they will be supported and training is available for the role, and they can see how it fits round their lives and work."
>
> **Victoria Dickinson, Volunteering Consultant**

> "People rarely go into their search for a new volunteer role genuinely open minded about what they want to do.
>
> Showing what volunteers will achieve, like helping to end poverty, not just what tasks they will do, like steam donated clothes, is absolutely crucial."
>
> **Laura Elson, Volunteering Strategy Consultant**





The digital front door

The digital front door

Volunteers' first interactions with your organisation are often digital.

Your website, volunteer portal, social media, and email communications form the 'digital front door', shaping whether interest becomes action.

> "The transition to a digital system completely revolutionized how our people engage. Having a single online space where our community can track their onboarding milestones, clear their training modules, and select shifts independently didn't just eliminate the administrative drag—it made volunteering with us entirely frictionless."
>
> **Program Operations Lead, Mayor's Fund for London**

PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	RECRUITMENT IMPACT
CLARITY	Landing page clearly answers: "How do I volunteer?"	Reduced drop-off, faster application starts
SPEED	Forms load quickly, confirmation emails sent instantly	Increased conversion from enquiry to first shift
ACCESSIBILITY	Mobile-first design, clear language, multilingual support	Broader demographic reach, inclusion
TRANSPARENCY	Show roles, time commitment, training, impact	Builds trust, increases confidence to commit
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	Immediate auto-responses and next-step guidance	Volunteers feel valued, early engagement reinforced

The Rosterfy Volunteer Portal

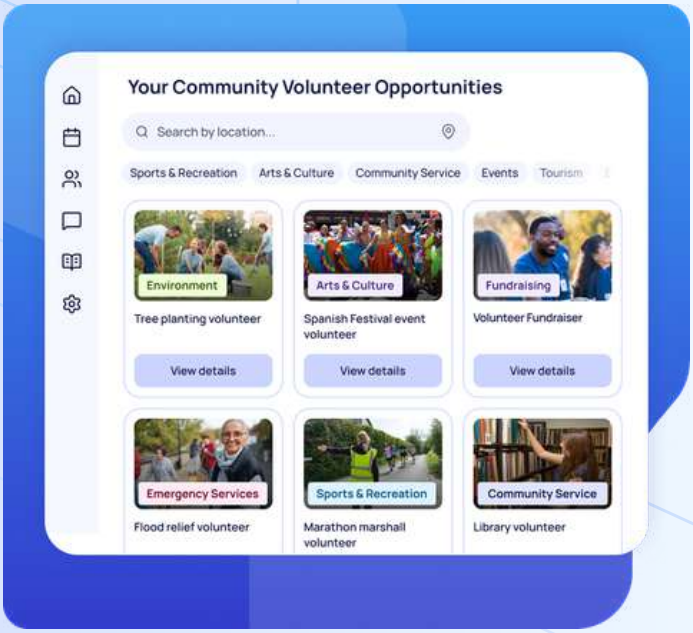
The gateway to modern volunteer engagement.

A centralized volunteer portal acts as a seamless digital front door, instantly removing barriers to entry.

By providing real-time role clarity, transparent scheduling, and rapid onboarding, Rosterfy's platform —trusted by leading programs worldwide—replaces administrative friction with instant accessibility.

When volunteers can effortlessly align opportunities with their preferences, time-to-impact drops drastically, driving higher retention and deeper organizational commitment.

Visit www.rosterfy.com for more.



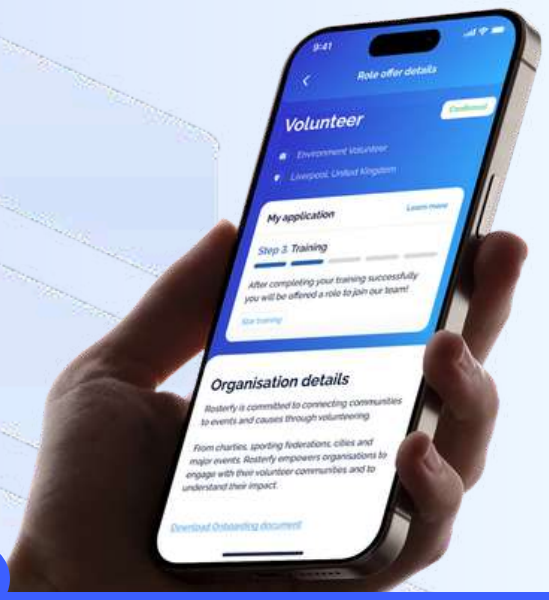
Scaling with Intention: Unlocking the power of enterprise automation

Unlock your potential with a platform you can grow into.

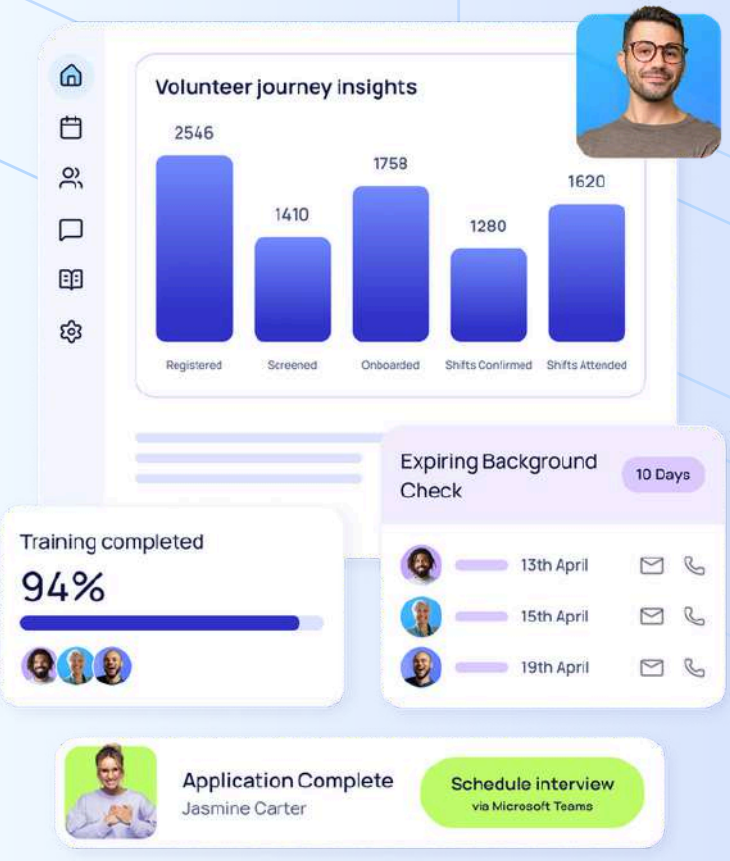
Many high-performing organizations reach a stage where standard digital calendars and mobile-responsive websites are no longer enough to sustain their growth.

When a volunteer program expands past 2,000+ active participants, operational complexity increases exponentially. Managing compliance, multi-site logistics, and real-time engagement requires a shift from basic scheduling tools to a robust, **enterprise-grade Volunteer Management System (VMS).**

Investing in a premium infrastructure means moving away from manual workarounds and building **a strategic system designed to scale seamlessly alongside your impact.**



> We were looking for a platform we could grow into. Rosterfy had the capabilities we needed for continued growth. The seamless process that our volunteers go through means they enter themselves into our system.
>
> Without Rosterfy we would need multiple people to keep things straight.
>
> **David Lapp, CEO, Blessings of Hope**



Transitioning to a Volunteer-Led Model

Designed by your team. Managed by your volunteers.

The hallmark of a mature enterprise operation is autonomy. By utilizing advanced technology, you remove your core staff from the role of administrative bottleneck and empower volunteers to manage their own journeys.

This transition drastically improves your conversion rates while freeing your internal team to focus on high-value community relationships.

With Rosterfy, your choose creates the volunteer jouneys and **our platform helps you automate the experience.**

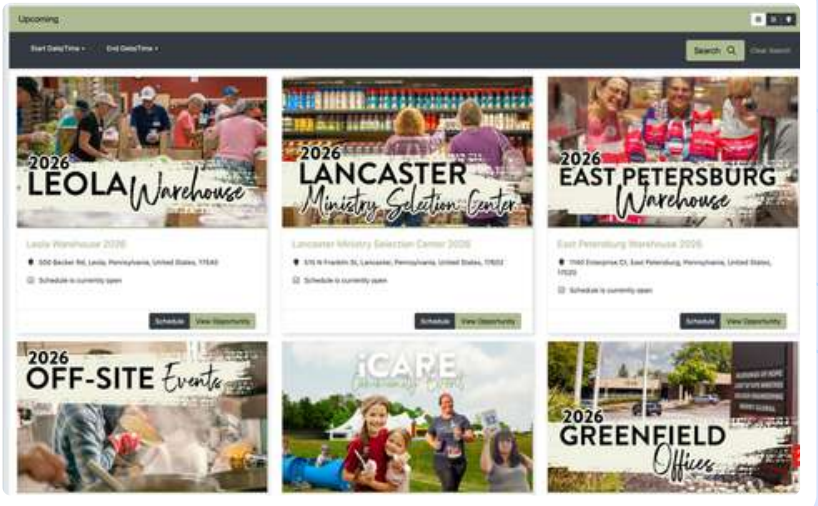
The digital gateway to making a difference

Democratizing the volunteer journey to foster human connection

An effective digital front door isn't a gatekeeper; it's an open welcome mat. For modern, purpose-driven organizations, a digital system should remove technical anxiety, bridge demographic gaps, and instantly give individuals agency over how they show up for their community.

A premier North American example of this philosophy in action is Blessings of Hope, a massive food distribution organization utilizing Rosterfy to power an incredibly diverse weekly workforce.

Rather than using technology to create boundaries, Blessings of Hope have a **highly accessible "Digital Gateway" designed to welcome everyone** with open arms. Whether a volunteer is young or old, tech-forward or a first-timer, the onboarding experience is seamless and intuitive.



By placing the ownership of the volunteer journey directly into the hands of the community, individuals can register from home, independently select their own shifts, and seamlessly check in and out of facilities via simple QR codes.

This self-service automation removes the operational friction that typically bogs down large programs.

More importantly, **it completely frees the internal staff from administrative gridlock—allowing the team to focus on adding the human touch**, building deep cultural relationships on the floor, and ensuring every single volunteer feels powerfully connected to the wonderful cause of solving hunger.

BLESSINGS OF HOPE

CASE STUDY: BLESSINGS OF HOPE

Industry: Nonprofit
Over 1,200 weekly active volunteers

Rosterfy features used:

- Self-service opportunities portal
- Automated onboarding
- QR code check-in /out attendance

Outcome: Delivery of 60,000 meals a day.

Explore the case study





Removing barriers to unlock volunteer growth

Removing barriers to unlock volunteer growth

Recruitment challenges are often framed as a shortage of volunteers.

In reality, many organizations face a shortage of accessible opportunities. Time, cost, and awareness remain the primary structural barriers to participation in North America.

Barrier removal is about designing volunteer journeys that are accessible and inclusive by default.

The question is not “Why aren’t people applying?” but **“Where are we making participation harder than it needs to be?”**

> “Doing good shouldn’t be hard; systemic resources, quality tools and available expertise are all needed to make smooth entry into volunteering communities possible.”
>
> **Adam Janes, CVA, President, Volunteer Management Profressionals of Canada**

Quick barrier audit for volunteer programmes.

Before redesigning your recruitment campaigns start by assessing:

- Are commitment levels flexible?
- Are shifts modular or short-term where possible?
- Is training proportionate to the role?
- Is language clear and free of jargon?
- Are travel or cost barriers acknowledged and mitigated?
- Is there visible diversity in our marketing and imagery?
- Are digital processes mobile-friendly and simple?



Volunteering barrier removal framework

Use this framework to identify where access challenges may be limiting recruitment performance.

> When you are managing thousands of active community members, lengthy onboarding chains are the fastest way to drive people away. Automating our milestone communications and shift notifications removed the standard procedural bottlenecks, accelerating our time-to-impact dramatically.
>
> **Onboarding & Screening Coordinator, Literacy Pirates**

BARRIER TYPE	HOW TO IDENTIFY	ADJUSTMENT NEEDED	IMPACT ON RECRUITMENT
AWARENESS	Low enquiries despite strong community presence	Add visible calls to action on website and social media, simplify “How to volunteer” pages	Increased enquiries and top-of-funnel growth
FINANCIAL	Limited zip code diversity, drop-off after enquiry	Publish clear expenses policy, reimburse travel, remove unnecessary costs	Wider socioeconomic participation
TIME & FLEXIBILITY	Applicant pool skewed to retirees or students	Offer evening/weekend shifts, trial sessions, modular commitments	Increased working-age applicants
PROCESS COMPLEXITY	High drop-off between registration and first-shift	Remove duplicate forms, modularise training, shorten time to placement	Improved conversion rate
PERCEPTION & REPRESENTATION	Narrow demographic profile in applicant pool	Review imagery and language, partner with community groups, showcase diverse volunteers	Broader applicant diversity



Rebuilding a program from the ground up

SXSW broken down admin friction to build a highly energized 2,000-strong festival workforce.

Prior to partnering with Rosterfy, SXSW faced the massive logistical challenge of rebuilding its post-pandemic workforce using outdated, manual scheduling.

By choosing Rosterfy's automated platform, SXSW shifted to a **volunteer-led model** where individuals choose their own shift schedules and sign agreements digitally.

This operational pivot condensed an exhaustive full-time administrative workload down to just 10 hours of part-time oversight per week during the festival season.

The true impact of this transformation lies in how it successfully removed systemic barriers to volunteering.

By replacing a rigid, manager-controlled system with an intuitive self-service portal, SXSW eliminated traditional friction and **gave volunteers total autonomy** over their time commitments.

Removing these hurdles streamlined the path to on-site impact, helping SXSW scale to **2,000 active volunteers** while achieving an extraordinary **90% retention rate.**



SXSW

CASE STUDY: SXSW

Industry: Major Events & Venue

Over 2,000 volunteers

Rosterfy features used:

- Opportunities Portal
- Attenance Tracking
- Background & Reference checks

Outcome: Completely rebuilt their program post-pandemic and held a 90% volunteer retention rate.

Explore the case study





Turning interest into action

Turning interest into action

Recruitment isn't just about attracting people – it's about ensuring that those who say "yes" actually begin.

Between the moment someone applies and when they begin their first shift lies a commonly overlooked performance gap: **volunteer conversion.**

High application numbers can be misleading – what feels like a recruitment shortage may actually be a conversion bottleneck.



Volunteer conversion funnel

Identifying drop-off points.



01 ENQUIRY / APPLICATION
Volunteer expresses interest or submits initial application
Drop-off: Delays after initial application

02 REGISTRATION SUBMITTED
Volunteer fills out forms and provides personal details
Drop-off: Lengthy or repetitive registration forms

03 COMPLIANCE / BACKGROUND CHECKS
Identity verification, references, safeguarding checks
Drop-off: Prolonged compliance checks

04 TRAINING & INDUCTION COMPLETED
Mandatory training, health & safety, role orientation Drop-off: Training delays

05 PRE-FIRST SHIFT ENGAGEMENT
Communication, scheduling, reminders before first shift
Drop-off: Lack of communication

06 FIRST SHIFT STARTED
Volunteer begins active service

Tracking stage-by-stage movement allows organisations to pinpoint where volunteers disengage and test targeted improvements. Data transforms guesswork into game-changing performance management



Measuring your volunteer conversion rate

Volunteer conversion rate is the percentage of people who apply to volunteer and go on to start their first shift.

Volunteer conversion rate (%)
Volunteers who start ÷ Total applications × 100

Working backwards from your target

Many organisations ask how many volunteers do we need to recruit?". A more effective question is:
"How many volunteers do we need to start?"

EXAMPLE: If your programme needs 1,000 volunteers to begin shifts and your conversion rate is 40%, you will need 2,500 applications.

If you improve conversion to 60% you only need 1,667 applications – 833 fewer applications for the same operational outcome.

Small improvements in conversion dramatically reduce marketing effort and recruitment pressure.

The goal shouldn't be to gain more interest - it should be to convert more of what you already attract.

CASE STUDY: LITERACY PIRATES

Industry: Children's Nonprofit
Over 500 volunteers

Impact: increased volunteer conversion rate by 30%

Literacy Pirates, a children's charity, identified volunteer drop-off during their screening and background check process. By redesigning onboarding in Rosterfy – streamlining training, moving background checks later in the journey, and monitoring each stage of the funnel – **they increased their volunteer conversion rate by 30%.**

Explore the case study



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Take the guesswork out of volunteer recruitment.

Don't just track applications – understand how many volunteers actually start and where drop-offs happen.

Use our Volunteer Conversion Calculator to:

- Calculate your current conversion rate
- Work backwards from your target number of volunteers
- Audit your funnel and pinpoint stages for improvement

Your Conversion Calculator



Retention as a recruitment strategy

Retention as a recruitment strategy

Recruitment and retention are inseparable.

Retention is not driven by a single moment – it's the result of consistent, well-designed experiences over time. High-performing volunteer programmes focus on a small number of core principles that shape how volunteers feel, engage, and return.

TIP: Use an Enterprise grade VMS automation found in Rosterfy to deliver an advanced cross-program with personalised journeys, bespoke onboarding, communication, and ongoing engagement.



Core principles of volunteer retention.

1. POSITIVE FIRST EXPERIENCES

• Early interactions set expectations. When volunteers feel welcomed, informed, and supported from the outset, they are far more likely to continue.

• Focus on creating a clear, structured introduction to your organisation – from initial communication through to first involvement.

2. RECOGNITION & FEEDBACK

• Volunteers need to know their time and contribution matter. Recognition reinforces value, while feedback creates a sense of progress and belonging.

• This can be simple but should be consistent – from informal thank-yous to more structured recognition moments.

3. CONSISTENT, RELEVANT COMMUNICATION

• Ongoing engagement relies on communication that is timely, clear, and aligned with volunteer preferences.

• Keeping volunteers informed about opportunities, updates, and impact helps maintain connection between moments of activity.

4. FLEXIBLE & MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES

• Volunteers are more likely to return when opportunities fit around their lives and feel worthwhile.

• Offering flexible formats – such as short-term, modular, or skills-based roles – allows more people to participate and continue contributing over time.

5. CLEAR PATHWAYS & PROGRESSION

• Retention strengthens when volunteers can see a future with your organisation.

• Creating opportunities for deeper involvement – whether through repeat participation, new responsibilities, or leadership roles – builds long-term commitment and a stronger sense of belonging.



Corporate partnerships to stengthen recruitment

Corporate volunteering can be a strategic recruitment channel

Corporate volunteering can be a strategic recruitment channel.

It introduces organisations to skilled professionals, younger cohorts, and individuals beyond existing networks. For many, volunteering begins through their workplace – making it a powerful entry point into longer-term engagement.

> Rosterfy is a lot more automated and streamlined, but another massive benefit is the reporting side of it. We can have a real picture of the demographics of our volunteers and who's engaging so we can identify gaps and then take steps to make sure that we've got an inclusive and representative cohort of volunteers.
>
> **Ellie Reid, Head of Workforce, London Youth Games**

The key to success is intentional design and follow-up. Roles should be meaningful, clearly structured, and well supported. After participation, simple steps such as sharing impact stories or inviting volunteers to future opportunities can convert a one-off activity into longer-term engagement.

Partnerships with recognised employers also strengthen credibility and visibility. When employees have a positive experience volunteering through work, they are more likely to return independently or recommend the organisation to others.

What corporate volunteering can deliver:

- **REACH:** Introduce your organisation to new audiences who may not already be connected to your cause.
- **SCALE:** Enable larger numbers of volunteers to participate through structured group opportunities.
- **PIPELINE:** Convert one-off participants into repeat volunteers, ambassadors, or supporters.
- **TRUST:** Employer partnerships increase credibility and raise awareness of volunteering opportunities.

CASE STUDY: LONDON YOUTH GAMES

Industry: Community Sports Programs
Over 900 volunteers

Impact: increased corporate involvement by 48%

By implementing Rosterfy to streamline their program, the London Youth Games achieved a remarkable **48% increase in corporate volunteer involvement**. This digital transformation has allowed the organization to offer exclusive, high-impact opportunities for corporate volunteers, seamlessly paired with bespoke co-branding that elevates each partner's visibility.

Furthermore, Rosterfy's robust CSR reporting tools provide corporations with tangible, data-driven insights into their social impact, adding immense long-term value to these vital partnerships.

Explore the case study



Measuring what matters

You can't improve what you don't measure. Tracking the right metrics shows whether recruitment and retention efforts are working. Beyond the numbers, it's about using those insights to tell stories that make volunteers feel their time and effort really matter.

Even a few well-chosen metrics can help you spot bottlenecks, track progress, and show the real impact of your volunteers. More importantly, sharing these insights as human stories reinforces purpose, celebrates contribution, and strengthens engagement.

TIP: Pick a few metrics that matter most to your programme. Then, turn the data into stories that celebrate volunteers' contributions, show the difference they make, and make them feel truly valued.

ADJUSTMENT NEEDED	IMPACT ON RECRUITMENT
APPLICATION RECEIVED	Measures visibility of your roles and reach of campaigns
VOLUNTEER CONVERSION RATE	% of applicants who go on to start their first shift; shows operational effectiveness
TIME TO FIRST SHIFT	How quickly volunteers move from sign-up to contribution
RETENTION / REPEAT VOLUNTEERS	Tracks ongoing engagement and satisfaction

Conclusion

Volunteer recruitment is no longer just about attracting people – it's about turning interest into action.

Modern volunteers are motivated, but busy lives, digital-first expectations, and complex processes create friction that causes drop-offs before the first shift.

Organisations that treat recruitment as a strategic system – designing flexible roles, removing barriers, and tracking volunteer journeys – can improve conversion, reduce repeated recruitment effort, and retain volunteers longer.

Key strategic shifts

- **PURPOSE-LED ROLES:** Clear responsibilities, impact, and flexible options.
- **FRICTIONLESS PROCESSES:** Streamlined applications, registration, training, and pre-shift engagement.
- **MEASURE AND OPTIMISE:** Track conversion at each stage to identify and remove bottlenecks.
- **RETENTION AS RECRUITMENT:** Onboarding, recognition, and progression build long-term engagement.
- **LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY:** Centralise volunteer management, automate communications, simplify scheduling, and provide real-time insights to improve conversion and retention.

Discover how Rosterfy will help your volunteer program scale by booking a call with our team.

Speak to our team



Sources:

1. Independent Sector & Do Good Institute.
2. Rosterfy Data, 2026
3. Marie Curie online survey, 2026

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Visit **www.rosterfy.com** book a demo today.